

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) A cooperative spam processing system comprising:  
a plurality of e-mail clients communicatively linked to one another; ~~and,~~  
a plurality of cooperative spam control processors, each of said plurality of cooperative spam control processors ~~processor~~ coupled to a corresponding one of said e-mail clients,  
wherein said plurality of cooperative spam control processors are configured to detect ~~comprises programming for detecting~~ spam and ~~for notifying~~ to notify others of said plurality of cooperative spam control processors of said spam; and,  
a group administrator for a group of ~~said~~ e-mail clients, said group administrator having authority to establish an agreement to exchange spam notifications with another group administrator ~~of other groups~~ of e-mail clients having respective cooperative spam control processors.
2. Canceled.
3. Canceled.
4. Canceled.
5. (Currently Amended) A cooperative spam control method comprising the steps of:  
accepting an electronic spam notification received from a peer e-mail recipient in a common computing group identifying a spam message received by said peer e-mail recipient;  
storing said notification;

if an e-mail is subsequently received which corresponds to said identified spam message, processing said received e-mail as spam; and,

consulting a peer policy for said peer e-mail recipient comprising rules for handling e-mail identified as spam by said peer e-mail recipient;

~~heeding~~ obeying said notification if said rules indicate that notifications from said peer e-mail recipient are to be ~~heeded~~ obeyed; and,

ignoring said notification if said rules indicate that notifications from said peer e-mail recipient are to be ignored; and,

overriding said notification where said e-mail message meets criteria established in said policy for overriding a spam notification.

6. Canceled.

7. Canceled.

8. Canceled.

9. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 5, wherein said consulting step comprises the step of consulting an internally managed local peer policy.

10. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 5, wherein said consulting step comprises the step of consulting a centrally managed remote peer policy.

11. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 5, further comprising the steps of:
- establishing an agreement with a different computing group for exchanging spam notifications;
  - forwarding spam notifications from individual peer e-mail recipients in said common computing group to said different computing group;
  - receiving spam notifications from said different computing group; and,
  - storing said received spam notifications in individual peer e-mail recipients in said common computing group.
12. (Currently Amended) A machine readable storage having stored thereon a computer program for cooperative spam control, the computer program comprising a routine set of instructions which when executed by a machine cause the machine to perform the steps of:
- accepting an electronic spam notification received from a peer e-mail recipient in a common computing group identifying a spam message received by said peer e-mail recipient;
  - storing said notification;
  - if an e-mail is subsequently received which corresponds to said identified spam message, processing said received e-mail as spam; ~~and,~~
  - consulting a peer policy for said peer e-mail recipient comprising rules for handling e-mail identified as spam by said peer e-mail recipient;
  - ~~heeding~~ obeying said notification if said rules indicate that notifications from said peer e-mail recipient are to be ~~heeded~~ obeyed; ~~and,~~
  - ignoring said notification if said rules indicate that notifications from said peer e-mail recipient are to be ignored; and,

overriding said notification where said e-mail message meets criteria established in said policy for overriding a spam notification.

13. Canceled.

14. Canceled.

15. Canceled.

16. (Previously Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 12, wherein said consulting step comprises the step of consulting an internally managed local peer policy.

17. (Previously Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 12, wherein said consulting step comprises the step of consulting a centrally managed remote peer policy.

18. (Previously Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

establishing an agreement with a different computing group for exchanging spam notifications;

forwarding spam notifications from individual peer e-mail recipients in said common computing group to said different computing group;

receiving spam notifications from said different computing group; and,

Application No.: 10/816,602

storing said received spam notifications in individual peer e-mail recipients in said common computing group.